

REMARKS

Claims 1-41 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants amend the specification and claims 1, 16, 29, and 41. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending claims at least in light of the following remarks.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Lay and Hjerpe in the August 15 personal interview. Applicants incorporate a separate record of the substance of the interview into the following remarks. Specifically, by this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1, 29, and 41 as proposed and discussed during the personal interview.

The Office Action objects to claims 1 and 16 for minor informalities. By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1 and 16 to correct the informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

The Office Action objects to the specification and drawings for informalities. By this Amendment, Applicants amend paragraphs [0052] and [0053] such that the reference characters in those paragraphs correspond to those in Fig. 16. Applicants also amend paragraphs [0069], [0074], [0075], and [0078] to correct informalities. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4, 6-19, 21-27, and 29-41 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent 6,707,454 to Barg et al. (hereinafter "Barg"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

As agreed during the personal, Barg fails to disclose that each tile is capable of having a first link and a second link, as recited in claims 1, 23, 29, and 41. Rather, Barg only discloses that each tile in the 3-D visualization may have a positive value (alleged by the Office Action to be a first link) or a negative value (alleged by the Office Action to be a second link).

Furthermore, as discussed during the personal interview the "links" recited in claims 1, 23, 29, and 41 link to additional information or data (see, e.g., paragraphs [0012] and [0013]). As recognized by Examiners Lay and Hjerpe during the interview, each of the positive and negative values in the 3-D visualization of Barg does not link to additional information or data. Thus, the positive and negative values in Barg cannot reasonably be considered "links," as recited in claims 1, 23, 29, and 41.

Because Barg fails to disclose that each tile is capable of having a first link and a second link, claims 1, 23, 29, and 41 are patentable over Barg. Further, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 4, 6-19, 21, 22, 24-27, and 30-40 are patentable for at least the reasons that claims 1, 23, and 29 are patentable as well as for the additional features they recite. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

The Office Action rejects claims 3, 5, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Barg. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

This rejection is premised upon the presumption that Barg discloses all of the features of claims 1 and 23, from which claims 3, 5, and 28 respectively depend. Because, as discussed above, Barg does not disclose all of the features of claims 1 and 28, the basis of the rejection is flawed. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

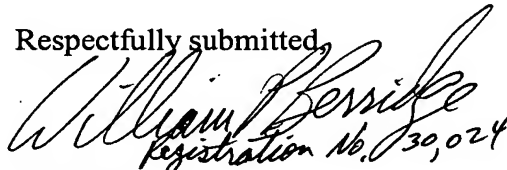
The Office Action rejects claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Barg in view of U.S. Patent 6,188,403 to Sacerdoti et al. (hereinafter "Sacerdoti"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

This rejection is premised upon the presumption that Barg discloses all of the features of claim 1, from which claim 20 indirectly depends. Because, as discussed above, Barg does not disclose all of the features of claim 1, the basis of the rejection is flawed. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of at least the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Applicants earnestly solicit favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-41.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James A. Oliff", with "Registration No. 30,024" written below it.

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